SOUTH VIET NAM In Struggle

6th Year — December 4, 1972

No 176

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CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION

6 FEB 13 1973
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editorial

WHO RUNS THE WHITE HOUSE'S BUSINESS

THIEU or NIXON?

THE American side continues to postpone the signing of the Agreement on ending the war and restoring peace in Viet Nam. It has pretexted the disagreement of the Nguyen Van Thieu administration. Can this justify the delay?

There is bound to be disagreement on the part of Thieu, the most reactionary servant of the US in Viet Nam. His interests are linked to the current war and US neo-colonialist rule. Therefore their frantic reaction is no surprise. Why shouldn't they object to the cessation of the war, the restoration of peace, the termination of American involvement and American domination when all this will end their dirty undertaking, which will be cursed for generations to come?

WHAT does Thieu oppose in this accord reached by the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and the United States? "The draft agreement made public by Hanoi," he stated on October 27, "says nothing about North Viet Nam's aggression nor about North Viet Nam's troop withdrawal." At the Paris Conference, Thieu's representative has kept on repeating the "aggression" charge and clamouring that his government "will not accept a cease-fire without the withdrawal of the Northern troops." Thieu has nonetheless never protested against the presence of the US expeditionary force or the shelling and bombing of his homeland by US aeroplanes and warships. He is afraid of his patriotic fellow-countrymen united in the fight against US aggression. He wants them to stop fighting and accept US neo-colonialist rule. He wants the United States to prolong the war and its domination so that he may go on amassing a fortune out of the blood of our people. But after almost twenty years, such a wild dream of a handful of reactionaries is still far from materializing.

Who has committed the aggression? Both realities and the most elementary norms of international law have shown that the US has. American troops and troops of US satellites are not of Vietnamese nationality; they have been sent to Viet Nam to implement the predatory plot of an imperialist power notorious for its cruelty. Viet Nam's is not their land. They have illegally come to this country, in defiance of international law, of the independence and sovereignty of the Vietnamese. So it is they who should withdraw from Viet Nam for the war to end and peace to be re-established. If there was no questions of Americans from North Carolina committing "aggression" against the State of New York, similarly there will never be aggression against Viet Nam by Vietnamese. Wherever they come from, wherever they operate, all fighting Vietnamese defend their fatherland in accordance with their sacred, inalienable right to self-defence.

The American imperialists deployed over half a million troops into Viet Nam, used over 10 million tons of bombs and munitions, spent over 200 billion, created a client administration and army, and have been carrying out the "Vietnamization" of the war in order to strip the Vietnamese people, through violence, of their fundamental national rights and their imprescriptible right to self-defence and thereby impose US-neo-colonialism on them. Never will violence be able to submit the Vietnamese people.

For four years the Paris Conference had been marking time precisely because the American side had been distorting facts, accusing the North of "aggression against the South" and demanding "mutual troop withdrawals." Such absurd arguments had been disposed of long ago. In recent negotiations between DRVN and US representatives nevertheless, the American side have agreed that "the United States respect the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Viet Nam as recognized by the 1954 Geneva Agreements." The accord reached by the two parties has also pointed out that "the question of Vietnamese armed forces in South Viet Nam will be settled by the two South Vietnamese parties in a spirit of reconciliation and national concord, equality and mutual respect, without foreign interference, with due consideration for the post-war situation; the measures to be discussed by the two South Vietnamese parties will include those to reduce the strength of their respective armed forces and to demobilize the troops affected."

The above are overriding principles serving as the basis of the Accord on ending the war and restoring peace in Viet Nam. They cannot be a matter for bargaining. Those mentioned in the October 26 Statement of the DRVN have been acknowledged by the American side at the highest echelon. How can Thieu, a US mini-agent, arrogate to himself the right to call them in question, to cross out what has been agreed upon? Reverting to the "North's aggression against the South" charge and claiming "mutual troop withdrawal" will only lead back to the impasse of the past several years.

THIEU also poohpoohs all forms of reconciliation and national concord. He wants to exterminate the Communists to the last man and does not recognize the third component in the Reconciliation and National Concord Committee. He wants to set up an "election committee" which he will use to legalize his "presidential" position. He wants to liquidate the revolutionary administrative machine, to force the liberation fighters to lay down their arms, to turn them into members of his "national community" and, with their votes, legalize the US neo-colonialist rule. That is another

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Ready to return blows to US-Thieu military ventures

CHI HOA JAIL

a hell on earth

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The choking regime imposed by the Thieu administration on detainees at the Chi Hoa prison in Saigon was denounced by South Viet Nam students to world public opinion in a letter and other documents sent to the International Assembly of Christians in Solidarity with the Indochinese People held in Quebec in October 1972.

Following are excerpts from the letter sent by students detained at Chi Hoa :

THE Chi Hoa prison in South Viet Nam is detaining some 10,000 persons including political prisoners accused of opposing the Saigon regime, as well as common law convicts with charges ranging from murder to "pot pushing."

Political prisoners are those persons considered "dangerous to national security." Some 100 persons of this category were brought to this prison monthly. Besides, nearly 1,000 people listed as common law offenders were brought there every month. Very few prisoners have been released, and among these no political detainees could be found.

1) Prisoners rule over prisoners

At Chi Hoa and other prisons across South Viet Nam, the Thieu regime applies the policy of "prisoners rule over prisoners." Under the guise of "keeping order and security," a number of prisoners named by the authorities are free to beat other prisoners. Most of these "order" keepers were notorious gangsters, hold-ups, robbers, rapists...

Some instances :

—Tran Van Loc, head of the "Order Group" of Sector FG and chief of Ward 1 F2. He is serving a five-year term for murdering a woman after robbing her of all her money and jewels.

— Nguyen Van Chi, head of the "Order Group" of Sector ED and head of Ward OD3. Charged with hold-up robbery, he is in for five years of imprisonment.

Particularly, in the common law prisoners' wards, most members of the "representative committees" are former gangsters or ruffians. They often use their physical strength against the inmates.

— Le Viet Dung alias "Dung the Mexican," head of Ward 3G2, who terrified Saigon people by his murders, hold-ups, rapes and other crimes. As member of the "representative committee," Dung and h mates beat their co-prisoners three or four tin. a week.

In the political wards, the auth. rities constantly apply the policy of repression and division by ordering secret agents to penetrate the wards and tell on anyone who demands better food or people with progressive ideas.

— Nguyen Van Hoang, head of Ward 2G4, is a placeman of the authorities. His main job is to stall the prisoners' struggle and report on those detainees who show genuine patriotism.

2) Life in Chi Hoa prison

In Chi Hoa prison, there is no study classes nor recreations for both political detainees and common law prisoners. Only religious activities are permitted, and on a compulsory basis.

Protestantism and Roman Catholicism are the predominant religions here.

Some cases of reprisals against "non-conformists" :

— Nguyen Hoang Quan, number 3991 GCGD, detained in ward 3F Sector FG, was forced on September 6, 1972 to attend the weekly lecture given by a Protestant priest. Quan refused to go and expressed his oppositions to this order. He was brutally beaten and sent to the Central Security Ward to be shackled.

After four weeks, Quan was transferred to another place on charge of "offense against religion" and disobedience to the "Representative Committee."

— Ngo Dong Thai, number 1296 GCGD detained in ward 2B2 of Sector BC, was forced on September 12, 1972 to attend the weekly mass officiated by "the Reverend" Tran Van Thong. Thai left the service before it ended and came back to his cell. He was called up by Tran Van Thong and was brutally beaten right in the church. Then he was sent to the Central Security Ward to be punished.

All the prisoners in Chi Hoa are afraid of Tran Van Thong because of his manhandling—which is even more brutal than the wardens'—and of his perfidy. For this, he is nicknamed the "Demon Priest" by the inmates.

With regard to the prisoners' daily life, it is miserable. Each ward of barely 48 square meters houses more than 100 detainees, including the toilet. Each prisoner has barely 0.32 square meter of "housing" floor. Due to the total absence of hygiene facilities, diseases are rampant. At present, Ward 162 in Sector FG is crammed with 181 prisoners. To have enough room, many of them have to lie in the corridor.

Moreover, food is both scant and inadequate. Each ration costs five Saigon piastres (roughly one US cent). In principles, each common law prisoner receives 50 grams of fish and 50 grams of vegetables. But in fact he never gets that much. The rice is usually undercooked and mixed with sand and other dirty things, the fish are often stale and the vegetables often rotten.

As far as political prisoners are concerned, thanks to their fierce and often bloody struggles, each of them receives daily some 120 grams of vegetables and 120 grams of fish. As to rice, the rations are not much bigger than those of common law prisoners. The fish are often stinking and the vegetables often turn yellow, being served at least three or four days late.

Generally speaking, due to malnutrition, Chi Hoa detainees have either fallen sick or are just skin and bones.

in the cities

+ In response to the 2 statements of the DRVN Government and RSVN PRG, tens of thousands of people living in the vicinity of cities and towns in Tra Vinh, Tay Ninh, Long An, Ben Tre and Vinh Long provinces have risen up and erased hundreds of strategic hamlets. They have talked thousands of Saigonese troops into leaving the enemy ranks or staging collective anti-war actions. They have also torn down thousands of three-stripe flags and thrown them on the pavements. Many reactionary slogans painted by the US-Thieu clique have been crossed out.

+ Millions of working peole in Saigon-Cholon and suburban areas have warmly welcomed the 2 statements and are urging the US-Thieu clique to satisfy their claims for better living conditions and other vital interests. This labour unrest flare-up began in early November.

+ On November 6, workers employed by the Fremos and Dennis Frères Milk factories went on a general strike in protest against arbitrary lay-off. The employers had to make concessions and meet the workers' legitimate claims.

+ On November 12, all rice porters in Cholon, Binh Dong and Binh Tay appointed a deputation to petition the employers for strict implementation of their contracts and higher wages.

+ All the 700 clergymen illegally detained at Chi Hoa jail, have demanded their immediate release so that they can resume their religious pursuit. They have called for support from various religious communities, various sections of the population and press circles.

+ On November 11, over 500 Saigon war invalids from Western Nam Bo marched on Can Tho city to protest repeated Thieu-instigated attempts on the life of the President of the local Association of Saigon war invalids. The marchers demanded that the local quisling authorities see to the safety of all war invalids and cease neglecting them.

+ Thousands of tradeswomen at 36 markets in Saigon have kept up their action against tax increases, fines and arbitrary eviction.

+ Tens of thousands of cyclocab drivers in Saigon persist in their demand for reduction of prices of spare parts. They have come out against higher taxes which are giving them a hard time.

+ The Thieu regime has promulgated a new law increasing taxes on motor vehicles by 900%. This has been strongly criticized by the Saigon public move as a brazen to rake money to fill the gap in the Saigon war budget.

+ People in Ben Tre city have many times had direct confrontations with the local quisling administration, forcing them to release many draftees including numerous Buddhist youths. They have also successfully resisted the enemy attempt to force them to carry three-stripe flags and buy posters bearing reactionary slogans.

+ The Thieu regime has decided to issue on-spot mobilization cards to clergymen, pupils and students in areas still under its control and send some 5,000 of seconded personnel including functionaries, teachers, engineers, architects and doctors to the front to replenish understrength army units. This disguised military draft trick has run into strong opposition in Saigon.

+ Under the new tax law of the Thieu regime, each student must pay an annual tax amounting to 10,000 piastres, an extortionist measure aimed at serving US "Vietnamization."

Neo-colonialist totalitarian legislation in Saigon

IT began with the June 2nd 1972 law no 004 on investments. All undertakings with an initial capital of 10 million South Vietnamese piastres, whether an agricultural, fishing or mine-prospecting enterprise, or an industrial firm with a capital of 20 million piastres shall enjoy multiple privileges and immunities including five years' freedom from taxes and a formal guarantee of non-nationalization in the future. Foreign capitalists who will have made investments in South Viet Nam shall be allowed to remit profits earned during the first five years and the initial capital after this period of time. Supplementary privileges are provided for for investments ten times larger than the above-mentioned sums, in the form of tax-exemption for a longer period or reduced taxes after this delay.

This open door or better this urgent appeal for foreign capital, chiefly American, concurrently requires consolidation of the Saigon regime to set Wall Street's mind at peace. It will call for greater concentration of powers in the hands of one local tyrant.

THE Saigon regime has been dubbed a "Diem regime without Diem" by Daniel Elsberg, a Rand researcher, in his testimony to the US Senate Foreign Affairs Commission on May 13, 1970. In fact, the March 18, 1967 Constitution of the 2nd Saigon Republic, which replaced the Diem October 20, 1955 Constitution officially condemned as fascist, is only democratic in appearance. It essentially sanctions the priority and omnipotence of the executive represented by the only president of the Republic. Nguyen Van Thieu returned President in 1967 in rigged elections financed and wire-pulled by US Ambassador Bunker did not waste time. As early as 1968, he rammed through law 10-68 which replaced Diem's bloody law 10-59 without so much noise. A year later, Saigon Congress was brought under control and in March 1970, dissenting representative Tran Ngoc Chau was arrested in the very meeting hall of the Lower House where he had taken shelter, still holding a copy of the Constitution in his hand and assisted by his lawyer.

In 1971, to keep in power Thieu who had proved a loyal flunkey, the Washington authorities staged a 2 act comedy: 1. — a new electoral law which barred everyone out but Thieu who was to run the race alone and 2. — completely cooked elections which gave him victory with a ridiculous 94.33% of the votes.

But that was still not enough to counter the popular movement which was given a further push by the dramatic successes of the National Front for Liberation, the RSVN PRG and the PLAF. A presidential regime though "stronger." than the existing US system was showing its inoperativeness. Thieu needed full powers and then came the scandal of law 005/72.

A first draft granting full powers to the President of the Saigon Republic for six months was passed by the Lower House under the "tamed" elements' control but was killed by the Senate. In virtue of the Constitution, it was sent back to the former where a 2/3 majority is required to bypass the latter's objection. But it could not be achieved. Never mind. One of the "tamed" elements at once tabled another draft bill, so-called of delegation of limited powers, which, a few amendments later, reverted to the initial draft of full powers and was approved with a relative majority.

The Upper House was consulted a second time on June 27, 1972. As many of its members were shut in at their home or turned back on their way to Parliament by Thieu's agents, its Speaker adjourned the session and went home for some refreshment. Then a Hollywoodian scenario unfolded. Twenty seven "tamed" senators broke into the meeting hall at night and debated the bill by themselves (the total membership is 60) under a second vice-speaker, the speaker being absent and the first vice-speaker confined to his house. Out of the three reporters only one was there to read the three reports in succession and the draft bill was immediately put to vote. The controversial act was adopted by 26 votes, the chairman of the session having abstained not out of a belated qualm of conscience but to make believe that there was a dissentient voice in the very democratic Saigon republic.

The law was promulgated the very following day, June 28, 1972, in the teeth of strong protests from the Senate Speaker who received the visit of 4 truckloads of policemen armed to the teeth and commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Trang Si Tan, Thieu's own son-in-law.

Since then Saigon has been deluged with decrees-laws which abolish the former already anti-democratic legislation and clamp down strict control on all facets of political, economical and cultural life in areas still under US-Thieu sway. The July 8, 1972 bill No 002/72 lowers the minimum draft age to 17 and raises the maximum limit to 43. The July 8, 1972 law No 003/72 cancelled the old regulation on the dual piastre-dollar rate of exchange which was tantamount to fixing a uniform value of the dollar at 425 to one piastre. The families of young Vietnamese studying abroad have now to remit to them four times the amount they used to send them (at the rate of 108 piastres to one dollar). The July 15, 1972 act No 004/72 provides for prison sentences for violations of the curfew and workers' strikes which are liable to a maximum penalty of two years in jail and 500,000 piastres' fine. That of July 25, 1972 bearing the No 005/72 on the state of emergency gives the police the right to carry out night and day house-searches and the drum-head court martial the comptence to try all infringements, on the strength of the emergency procedure, the July 28, 1972 law replaces the old customs duties with far heavier new ones. The press law No 007/72 gags the press by requiring each daily to deposit a security of 20 million piastres and each magazine ten million, to pay for eventual fines. Any paper or magazine which cannot comply with the new rule will be closed down. And so will any paper confiscated for the second time, after the first seizure and trial. The bill No 011/72 abolishes administrative disciplinary proceedings for all civil servants arrested under the charge of collusion with the Communists under various forms of indirect pro-Communist propaganda. This places them at the mercy of the police without their direct bosses and colleagues being able to put in a good word for them.

Added to those decrees-laws, other ordinary decrees of the President of the Republic reinforce the executive namely by abrogating all grass roots elections (at village, district and province levels), thereby concentrating to a high degree all powers in one man's hands. "The executive, the legislative and the judiciary," Thieu himself has proclaimed, "must make a whole," while all democratic freedoms and fundamental civil rights are gradually reduced to nil.

The shower of ordinances will continue until the expiration of the 6 months' delay, i.e. on December 28, 1972 when, without fail, a detailed scenario will be implemented to extend it under the pretext of the prolongation of the war.

It seems superfluous to speak of illegality. Under the anti-Communism slogan, all democratic principles have been outrageously violated. The 1967 Constitution, a fig-leaf for US designs, has been torn in many a place.

It is fascism, but a fascism of the Oriental type and of the gangster type as well, which wields the big stick and does not even take the trouble to humour the people.

US — Thieu totalitarianism is naked. It is a neo-colonial totalitarianism for it openly serves imperialist interest, and sees to the security of the investments of Wall Street financiers and other worshippers of Mammon. It was no chance that the full powers bill was followed by that on investments. It was a thinly veiled avowal and better still a concerted plan.

In fact, Saigon neo-colonialist totalitarianism rests upon only one foundation, US strength. US ground forces are going but US Navy and USAF are deployed en masse in South Vietnamese and Indochinese theatres of operations to support the Saigon army, paid, equipped, trained and actually commanded by Washington. After the "Vietnamization" of the land war, there is talk of aerial and naval "Vietnamization," i.e. of the total war waged with native blood and US dollars.

There is an obvious correlation between this neo-colonialist totalitarian legislation by ordinances and the stepped-up "Vietnamization" of the war and US doubtful dallying in the the peace negotiations. Nixon refuses to sign the draft agreement on ceasing the hostilities and puts up the "dog's tail" act because he cannot bring himself to give up his neo-colonialist schemes. Peace will mean the end of the "Vietnamization" policy and toll the knell of the Thieu rule by decrees-laws. So master and man are thick as thieves in their attempt to prolong the last hours of US neo-colonialism in South Viet Nam. But the advance of the South Vietnamese people and armed forces, the impetuous movement for peace of the world and American peoples and the galloping decay of the Thieu regime will not give it a new lease of life.

HAI VAN

In our liberated area

In newly-freed zone, children merrily go to school, defying bombs and shells

the Mekong delta

revolutionary forces' offensive posture

EIGHT months of impetuous offensives and uprisings of the liberation armed forces and people in this rich, densely populated and strategically important area have made their posture steadier than ever before in every respect, to the great alarm of Washington and its Saigon stooges. To such an extent that Western opinion is speaking of a revolutionary flare-up more violent than at any previous time, while seriously threatening the pacification program.

After shattering large bits of the shield protecting the Mekong delta, the "whirlwind of the offensives" repeatedly hit strategic sectors, thereby weakening the whole US-Saigon defence system along vital arteries and in the vicinity of urban centres. The Vinh Kim military subsectors, My Tho province, and other positions along Highway 4 were erased. The military subsector of the Tra Vinh municipal district and series of others from Ben Tre to Ca Mau were destroyed or came under heavy attack. Most remarkable were the onsets on village militia and civil guard garrisons. In Western Nam Bo, in three weeks starting from October 21, the PLAF blotted out almost 40 % in Can Tho alone they destroyed or forced the evacuation of 23 of them in the last two weeks of the month. In My Tho, Central Nam Bo, the number of garrison buildings evelled or withdrawn in 40 days in two districts adjoining Highway 4, amounted to nearly 30. The figure has risen higher in Ben Tre — 70 — since late September. All told, throughout the past eight months, in the rural areas of the Mekong delta, the liberation forces knocked down or compelled to surrender or decamp about 1,500 garrisons.

The PLAF military actions effectively helped the population's uprisings. While "government" forces were surrounded and overwhelmed by guerillas and had landed in a passive position in the Mekong delta exactly as in 1964 (*Newsweek*, September 18), and while liberation troops were seeking to pin down three Saigon divisions in the areas by opening several fronts (*AFP*, August 1) the local population, through uninterrupted insurrections, crushed the enemy's grassroots administrative machine and disbanded civil guard forces and reactionary political organizations. In My Tho, Ben Tre, Kien Tuong, Can Tho, Tra Vinh, Vinh Long, Ca Mau and Rach Gia provinces, since April another 30 villages and 700 hamlets were liberated whereas in 1,500 hamlets, to various degrees, power was recovered by the people. The pacification program has been undermined throughout the Mekong delta and has collapsed in many key sectors. US-Saigon attempt to push the war to the west of this perimeter has met with total failure. American advisers themselves have admitted that the patriotic forces had seized most of My Tho, Kien Tuong and Chuong Thien provinces, that security prevails nowhere in the delta, and that on the war map of this area it is hard to distinguish the control border of the two sides (*Newsweek*, August 21; *US News and World Report*, September 25; *AFP*, October 30).

In the last 40 days along with onsets on adverse defence lines, with dismantling "strategic hamlets" and shattering the repressive system, the PLAF and population in the Mekong delta repeatedly struck at military storages and chopped up communications. Can Tho guerillas blew up a 35,000-ton amunition dump at the Vi Thanh base. My Tho regional troops shelled and assailed the Hung Vuong military training centre, bases Nos 23 and 24, armoured troop CP No. 6 and a river base, and at the same time launched series of attacks along waterways and trategic Route 4. As a result, a number of warships were sunk or set a fire, many positions razed and military vehicles put out of commission. The enemy command had to field sizeable rescuing forces to clear communications but in vain, and lost 2 battalions at Cai Lay on October 20.

The American and Saigon brasshats are now concentrating on counter-actions designed to recapture lost territory, which only aggravates their loss of the initiative.

The balance of forces has been consequently tilted in favour of the revolutionary forces in the Mekong delta. The enemy's outer defence network is crumbling, the inner one running through the middle has been smashed at Cai Lay and pierced in many other places, while the one protecting rural areas, with large bits crushed, is shaking everywhere. All the three divisions guarding this region have been bloodied. Division 21, defeated in Binh Long, is incapable of any meaningful counter-attack (the number of its deserters runs as high as 4,500—the equivalent of its present troop strength). Divisions 7 and 9, pinned down in My Tho province, come under PLAF continuous fire. Miniamen's and civil guards' ranks are disorganized and their morale sagging. More than ever rebellions and desertions are on the upgrade. On the other hand, as regards their position and strength the revolutionary forces have made giant's strides. They now control an ever larger liberated zone with more and more springboards for free military operations and further successes.

THIEU or NIXON?

(Continued from page 1)

fantastic vision of a quisling dictator sticking to his power and position. How can he achieve such an ambition which both master and servant have not been able to realize for many years, by resorting to heinous crimes and a series of wicked strategies?

Why does Thieu set his face against reconciliation and national concord? The concept "nation" is non-existent for him. Imperialist America is his fatherland. Instead of mingling with the patriots' community, he is bent on holding on to the US aggressors and help them murder his fellow-citizens. He dreads the collapse of the US neo-colonialist rule, the end of slavery and massacres in his country and is concerned only about his position.

Clearly, by opposing national concord Thieu has excluded himself from the Vietnamese national community and declared himself the worst of all traitors, good only to be cast aside.

Thieu also takes exception to other points, but his refusal of the two basic ones mentioned above already raises the obstacle to a peaceful solution, to the signing of the agreement. Has Nixon put this off because he dares not by-pass Nguyen Van Thieu's veto? Has the moment come when a native "President" on US payroll can run the White House's business?

BY nature, a puppet can never pull the wires. Thieu dares to disagree because, first of all, the objections he makes entirely suit the interests of US neo-colonialism. He comes out against the signing of the agreement because Nixon himself does not want to sign it yet. The former's rejection and the latter's reluctance are merely one and the same farce performed by both man and master. Thieu can only act as the interpreter of Nixon's intention. Nixon only must be blamed for the present tension.

Despite lamentable setbacks on the battlefield in Viet Nam and throughout Indochina, the American President has not renounced his aggressive design. He is hanging on to neo-colonialism though "Vietnamization" is heading for total fiasco. And though imperialism is declining and colonialism of the old type dying, the nature of US imperialism has not changed. The Nixon doctrine is precisely a new form of the counter-revolutionary US global strategy struggling hard to adjust itself to new circumstances. Having lost and being forced to pull out most of the American troops, Mr Nixon, however, wants to prolong and expand the war; having withdrawn his ground troops, he has been beefing up the US Air Force and Navy to re-Americanize the war with after the failure of Vietnamization.

Mr Nixon is reputed not only for his hawkishness but also for his deceit. With a pledge to "end the war within six months" in 1968, he duped the American electors into voting for him. This year, instead of making a promise, he engaged in secret negotiations and reached an agreement with the opponent so as to create the illusion that peace was "at hand." Generous and tolerant, American voters have given him time to complete the settlement. It is obvious nonetheless that after winning the election with a comfortable majority, Nixon does not seem to care seriously to comply with the popular wish. He hopes to be able to turn the tide and step up the war in an attempt to score a few military successes, thereby securing a position of strength at the bargaining table, and alter what has been agreed upon in October. US rushing of hardware to South Viet Nam, sudden intensification of sorties of tactical and strategic aircraft in both South and North, just as the police actions of the Saigon regime after Nixon's volte-face—all that spells out the dark scheme and mad dream of the American President. After winning the race to the White House, Nixon thinks he can delay the signing of the agreement and prolong the war as he likes. The Vietnamese, who have been successfully confronting US imperialism for over a quarter-century, perfectly know that Nixon has not more than a four-year term to drag out and intensify the aggression. As for themselves, they have enough moral and material strength and more time than Nixon to foil all his vicious manœuvres.

OUR people are deeply attached to peace but they always bear in mind President Ho Chi Minh's simple words: "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom". They realize that two courses of action are open to them for achieving their basic objectives: settle the war through negotiations or carry on the fighting until total victory. So far in the supreme interests of the nation, in consideration of the earnest desire of the peace- and justice-loving mankind, the people, the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the RSVN, like the people and Government of the DRVN, have been striving to terminate the war and re-establish peace through negotiations. All efforts to get out of the impasse at the Conference table have been initiatives of the Vietnamese side. But if the American side does not want meaningful talks and intends to cancel what has been agreed on and start again from the beginning its dirty aggression, the Vietnamese people will carry on their battle until independence, freedom and peace are achieved. The iron-like determination of the South Vietnamese people, of the entire Vietnamese people, is backed by progressives the world over.

Which way the Viet Nam problem will be settled? It's up to Mr Nixon to make the choice.

SOUTH VIET NAM

After a victorious attack

A steel column at the gate of Vinh Kim

THE first morning glow began to tear up the thick veil of mist when Company 3 received orders to prepare for an action against the 402nd Security Forces battalion which was advancing towards Vinh Kim town on a relief mission. In next to no time, the men took up their positions. All their guns were pointed in the direction of Highway 4. The reinforcement column cautiously inched forward under the guidance of an observation plane. When they reached a point close to our position, they suddenly halted. The observation plane climbed down, dropped smoke grenades then hovered behind the column's formation to urge it on.

Hung re-adjusted his linen cap and signed to his comrades to wait. When the enemy troops moved in at a distance of about 20 yards from our position, he shouted, "Fire!"

The heavy machine-gun began barking. The whole company blazed away and within minutes the enemy formation was cut into fragments. The adversary hastily pulled back, leaving behind many dead. The Liberation fighters sounded the charge. Their battle cries drowned the enemy's screaming. Group leader Nang led his men in a flanking move to the left driving the opponents out into the open field. Just at this moment our mortar shells landed smack on the enemy. Under the command of Tien, platoon One launched a frontal attack. In the ensuing close-range combat, the Liberation fighters badly mauled their adversary. Nang detected an enemy machine-gun pit behind a mound. A burst of automatic rifle fire instantly cut down the gunner. The enemy detachment was hemmed in by the 3-prong assault of Company 3. Through megaphones, the attacking forces called on them to surrender. The enemy commanding officer laid down his arms. All the remaining 23 men of his company followed suit. Company 3 collected all their weapons and quickly joined other friendly units in their push forward.

The 402nd Security Forces battalion was written off as a fighting unit. The news soon reached every Liberation fighter. The field command radioed congratulations to Company 3 on its destruction of an enemy company by wiping over 40 of its men, capturing 24 others and seizing 20 weapons and a transceiver.

Another night had gone. Members of Company 2 still held their ground right at the gate of Vinh Kim.

The sun came up in a glare. Artillery from various enemy bases began pounding the scene of battle, and blasted to smithereens the enemy dead left behind. At 10 a.m. the shelling stopped. 3 enemy battalions converged from several directions on Dong Hoa. The leading column made contact with our men at the edge of Tram Bau; it quickly broke off the engagement and called in artillery support. Enemy jets took turns to plaster the area with bombs. Now and then demolition and napalm bombs sent up columns of fire next door to Vinh Kim. Dirt and smoke filled their combat pits but fighters of Company 3 did not yield an inch, their guns at the ready. The roof of the bunker occupied by Chuc's section was blown off. Our men lay down right in the bomb crater, waiting. In the town, guerillas had opened up and their fire greatly stimulated the Liberation fighters.

At 2 p.m. when the area had become a shambles, the 3 adverse battalions closed in. One of them made a direct thrust into the approach to Vinh Kim. All of a sudden, the heavy machine-gun manned by the section unleashed a raking fire. All the other weapons simultaneously went into action. The "Determination to Win" banner waved by Hung put the Company 3 men on their mettle. From all directions, our soldiers swarmed out and engaged the enemy in hand-to-hand fighting. Other friendly units also rushed into the fray. After an hour's fighting, all the 3 enemy battalions were badly battered. The dead and wounded littered the ground. Once again Company 3 carried the day, by completely knocking out a company of the 67th Ranger battalion, seizing dozens of weapons and taking 13 more prisoners.

Captured ordnance pouring fire on routed enemy

In the great rear

QUANG BINH, a steel fortress

FIRED by the "Nothing is more precious than Independence and Freedom" spirit, the Quang Binh province army and people have been, together with the rest of the army and people of the whole country, defying all difficulties and hardships, standing combat-ready and fighting with great efficiency, with the determination to foil all schemes and acts of the US aggressors in their air and naval war against North Viet Nam.

A province serving as immediate rear of the great front and more particularly of the kindred Quang Tri and Thua Thien provinces, Quang Binh has been day and night displaying a high revolutionary mettle and has returned smashing blows at the modern air force and navy of the US. It has given proofs of the inexhaustible capabilities and insuperable strength of the people's war and revolutionary heroism.

In their current war of destruction, a big fleet of US aircraft and warships have been mounting most atrocious raids on Quang Binh. More than 4,300 sorties of tactical jet planes and over 400 sorties of B.52 bombers have day and night showering thousands of bombs and shells on peaceful villages, towns, hospitals, schools, churches and roads in the province. Its sea ports, rivermouths and ferries have been mined. Civilians have been hit at, with the hope of dampening the fighting spirit of the army and people in the locality and preventing the assistance of the rear to the frontline. However, the latter have completely frustrated the enemy's moves.

Over the past seven months, they have downed many aircraft, including B.52 bombers and F-111 swing-wing aircraft, set ablaze many warships and wiped out or captured many US pilots.

Many units have been credited with great feats like Artillery company X who shot ablaze three US warships in one day, or the women gunners of Village N. who set afire warships under Johnson as well as under Nixon, or the old militiamen of Village N. who brought down one US aircraft and set fire on one US warship.

The army and people of Quang Binh have also distinguished themselves in production, clinging to their ricefields and the sea to bringing in unprecedented bumper rice crops and abundant fish catches. The current winter crop is also very promising. Braving the round-the-clock bombing and shelling by the enemy, the people and combatants of Quang Binh have kept traffic to the front open in all circumstances.

In the thick of the war, the people and combatants of Quang Binh continue their normal life characterized by complete unity of mind and a high resolve to confront the enemy.

Continuing the tradition of the "Nghe-Tinh Soviet Uprising" and the "Indomitable Tri-Thien," Quang Binh has constantly upheld the banner of "winning one hundred battles out of one hundred engaged." Each hamlet, each village, each street quarter, each stretch of road or river and each ferry has really become a steel fort, and each citizen a staunch combatant.

In the forefront of the anti-US resistance for national salvation, Quang Binh has lived up to its reputation as a rear area of the great heroic front.

The liberation armed forces and people of South Viet Nam warmly hail the exploits of the people of Quang Binh and pledge to strive, together with the people in the rest of the country, to contribute to our complete triumph over the US aggressors.

TRONG LONG

Harvest time at the Quang Binh front

AT the drying-yard of production brigade 14 in the Vo Ninh co-op (Quang Binh), thrashing machines are droning. There is no hubble-bubble. People work with a great sense of urgency and their movements are well orchestrated in a visible effort to keep pace with the machines. This year, the Autumn crop here is quite good.

The spacious yard is divided into two parts, one where grain is swept into heaps and the other to accommodate newly harvested rice and the threshers. About 20 people are busy in the yard. They have shelters ready at hand in case of an air raid. The chain of production is readjusted to war time conditions. If enemy planes come, the 3 men who bring in the rice will take cover in nearby undergrounds, the women who sweep the grain and pitchfork the straw will seek refuge in the left-side shelters, very solid, while the smaller ones who carry straw can go into safety along their path. The other group will get protection in solid dug-outs to the right side of the drying-yard. And so everybody sees to his own job and knows where to go during an air strike. An observation tower is erected on a sand dune. Various stages of an alert have been determined by specific regulations.

This air-defence plan is for those working in the drying-yard. In the open field, things are different. The brigade has 8 teams of harvesters, one team doing light work in the drying-yard, and a team of ploughmen. The team of the militia youths headed by a youth leader do the reaping in distant fields and in the sectors subject to frequent enemy attacks. The team of mothers with babies tackles nearer plots. That of mothers with bigger children looks after fields reserved for selected strains and glutinous paddy rice. The group of young pioneers, 18 in all, is divided into 3 teams which are assigned to gather Agriculture 8 rice. Each team is placed under the charge of a youth. Women and girls not strong enough for the harvesting are given tasks in the drying-yard. The group of old folk is specialized in growing potatoes. The team of ploughmen does it work in a well-timed way. The fields are immediately turned up where the plants have been cut. Not only at Vo Ninh, but in all of the vast rice area of Quang Binh province, do people bring in their crop amidst the ferocious enemy air blitz. Many localities have been time and again raided by B.52's.

Thanks to rational allocation of labour and well-organized civilian defence co-op farmers succeed in raising labour efficiency in all circumstances during harvest time. The rate of increase is as high as 20%. The grain is immediately distributed to co-op members. Everybody races against time and everything seems to be done at an accelerated tempo and with the mettle of victors.

the DRVN in brief

+ On the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the International Day of Teachers' Charter (November 20), 430 groups of teachers were awarded the title of "Socialist Labour Team" by the DRVN Government. 71 of them were from infant schools, 326 from general education schools, 26 from continuation schools and 4 from normal schools. The schools the teams belonged to comprised 164 primary schools, 134 elementary schools and 28 secondary schools.

+ While excavating vestiges of the Kings Hung period, Vietnamese archaeologists have discovered terra cotta cocks and hens, dating back to four thousand years. A cock made of bronze, with wide-opened eyes, head turned backward, and fanned tail, was also found; it is estimated that this cock was cast 25 centuries ago.

4,000-year-old terra cotta and bronze cock and hen discovered in Hoai Duc district, Ha Tay province

+ A resolution was passed by followers of the Cao Dai religious sect, supporting the DRVN Government's October 26 Statement and calling on religious circles the world over and in the United States to give stronger backing to the Vietnamese people's fight for peace, independence and freedom.

+ To meet the growing needs of the fighting, "self-defence" and militia units in many provinces have organized refresher courses for their members on how to fight and help thi fighting. Additional patrol teams have been posted on vitae road sections to deal with enemy planes.

+ Fired by the resolve to fight and to defeat the Yankee aggressors, "self-defence" and militia units in Nghe An, Thanh Hoa and Vinh Linh have placed hundreds of their teams on permanent duty and organized thousands of peasants' and workers' squads. New shelters were dug, old ones consolidated, numerous combat positions erected, observation posts built to watch the movements of enemy airplanes and vessels, patrols were reinforced and kept in full preparedness.

+ In spite of heavy enemy attacks, harvesting in all provinces has been going on at a high tempo. All people have been mobilized for the job and a good A-A defence network set up. As a result, by November 10, 1972, in 70 percent of the area grown with autumn rice, harvest was completed, in some localities the percentage was as high as 80 percent.

+ Cao Bang province has used for this autumn a new kind of strain giving a low plant of short growth on more than 3,000 hectares, that is 50% more than the average of previous years. The average yield is 3 tons per hectare, and may reach 6.2 – 7 tons per hectare in some localities.

+ The Nam Ha engineering plant, though located in a heavily hit locality, has overfulfilled its plan, and its workers' labour efficiency has increased by 13 percent.

+ A machine to dig irrigation canals was recently produced. Following closely a bulldozer, it can cut large and deep canals, and replace tens of thousands of peasants working with their hands. This machine has been put into use in many delta provinces.

The homeguards of Viet Tri's power station in combat-readiness

Cambodian patriots' posture after monsoon gain

THE past rainy season in Cambodia saw the greatest ever victory of the patriots there. According to *AKI*, the Cambodian armed forces and people, in the period from May to October, put out of action 54,000 enemy, levelled 258 army posts and barracks, destroyed 222 military vehicles, sank or damaged 28 war vessels, and shot down or destroyed on the ground 46 war planes. Enemy casualties, as compared with the previous wet season, went up 4 times.

This many-sided achievement of the Cambodian people and armed forces is profoundly significant.

First, in terms of enemy manpower wiped out, adverse casualties were just a little less than the figure (56,000) for the 7 months of the preceding dry season, and the total of posts and barracks razed to the ground was much greater than the corresponding figure (220) for the previous period. Adverse material losses marked a sharp increase. Remarkably enough, weather conditions now have very little effect on the development of the Cambodian revolutionary war. The wet monsoon, for example, is no longer favourable to the enemy alone. The US and the clique of its henchmen in Phnom Penh used to take advantage of rains to mount large-scale operations to retake lost ground, strengthen their military posture, and gain more strength to cope with the revolutionary forces in dry weather. Operation Chenla I was launched in the wet season of 1970 to defend Tang Kok. In the following rains, the enemy staged Operation Chenla II to clear Highway 6, particularly the stretch from Tang Kok to the capital of Kompong Thom province. In the last rainy season, although their forces were dwindling, they hurled whatever force they could scrape up into Operations Sorya I, Sorya II and Angkor Chey along Highway 1 and in Siem Reap province to ease pressure on strategic roads and protect their last hideouts in Phnom Penh. But then too, disastrous setbacks befell the aggressors and traitors alike. The fiasco of Operations Chenla I and II had marked the inevitable decline of the Phnom Penh regime. In the last rains, for all US air support, a series of battalion of the Phnom Penh army were wiped out or disbanded in Kompong Trabek (Prey Veng), in Krang Chek and Peang Lorvea (Kompong Speu), and other places.

What is obvious is that rain, storm and difficult terrain are no allies of the US-Phnom Penh rule. The Cambodian people and armed forces have won despite adverse weather conditions. Their success in the last wet season — the third in their current armed resistance — by far surpassed all previous ones.

As a result, the balance on the battlefield has changed more and more in favour of the Cambodian revolutionaries. During Operation Chenla I along Highways 6 and 7 in the first wet monsoon, Abrams and the Lon Nol-Sirik Matak clique could deploy as many as 50 battalions. Operation Chenla II in the following wet monsoon involved over 20,000 troops, or more than 70 battalions. But Operations Angkor Chey, Sorya I and Sorya II in Siem Reap and along Highway 1 were very pale immitations. Moreover, the Phnom Penh army, since the failure of Operation Chenla II, which typified the "Khmerization" strategy, has been heading toward total collapse, under the impact of the offensive of the Cambodian People's National Liberation Army.

The latter has been striking at the enemy in all parts of the country, harassing him on strategic communication lines, threatening, with many daring thrusts, even the main sanctuary of the enemy in Phnom Penh. Highway 1, the main corridor linking the capital city with Saigon in South Viet Nam, was interdicted at Neak Luong. The patriots through withering actions in Kompong Trabek, Takauk, Neak Luong, Udong and Svey Rieng, have chopped up many great lifelines.

The Cambodian patriots, by beating off enemy clearing operations, smashing enemy lines around urban centres and pushing up guerilla activities in the countryside to rid it of the quisling machine of coercion, have expanded their own territory to key areas, with another 480,000 inhabitants added to the population of the liberated zone. *Reuter* has quoted some US advisors as admitting that 85 percent of the Cambodian territory are under the liberation forces' control and that Phnom Penh is now in a virtual state of siege.

Drastic changes have been operated in the war situation. The Lon Nol army is being sapped by galloping demoralization and defeatism. In Phnom Penh, corruption and daylight robbery have become common practice. The hired army has failed even in its modest role keeping roads open to traffic and in providing support for "pacification" raids under intensive US fire cover. One wonder how it can hold out in strategic theatres. *AP* noted on October 28 that only 60 percent of the troop strength of the Phnom Penh army existed at all, and that army was unable to hold the liberation forces in check.

The latter, meanwhile, have grown fast in both strength and posture while fighting around Phnom Penh and other vital areas. Now they are following up their gains in the past rains, on all fronts. Particularly, they are paralysing the main communication lines and denying them to the enemy. Phnom Penh forces have been routed on Pik Nil hill, in Veal Renh, and badly battered right in their big bases in Trapeng Kraleng. In the first three days of November alone, 550 enemy among them 2 generals and 20 other senior officers were knocked out along Highways 4 and 5. Whole heavily escorted convoys, some having as many as 50 vehicles loaded with weapons and military equipment, have been destroyed. All the roads converging on the capital city have been severed. To the Lon Nol troops, they have become "roads of death," or "streets without joy." And Western agencies have reported on the great danger on Highway 2 leading to Takeo as a result of frequent artillery and ground attacks by the patriotic forces, about the futile attempt of Phnom Penh to open Highway 4 despite the biggest bombing campaign in all the two years and a half of war, of the isolation of Phnom Penh from the Kompong Som port, of the advance at a snail's pace along Highway 5 of three entire Phnom Penh brigades, etc.

And the last straw is the great difficulties of the Saigon army back in South Viet Nam, which accounts for the flop of the US-masterminded "regional alliance," and the ineffective role of the USAF, due to the dispersion of its means to other Indochinese battlefields.

MEANWHILE, the fraternal revolutionary forces in Laos and Cambodia also made big headway in the last wet monsoon. The strength of the three Indochinese peoples consequently has become greater than ever, and their position is at its strongest.

As for Nixon, he has obviously failed in all his three "Khmerization," "Laotianization" and "Vietnamization" schemes. His doctrine, under the mounting onslaughts of the Indochinese revolutionaries, has shown its great vulnerability.

THANH HONG

Here and there

Feverish activity

"You and I, though two, are but one," wrote Vietnamese poet Tan Da, of the early 1930's addressing his own effigy.

With due regard for this poet-dreamer's memory, this line can be used to describe the Nixon-Thieu relationship of duplicity which has stirred up widespread outcries with the postponed signing of the Viet Nam peace accord.

What is Mr Nixon's motive? It is clear that he is only playing for time to rush up the supply of more armoury to Thieu, in order to strengthen his bargaining position and give more muscle to the Saigon army for better continuing Vietnamization.

Hence the incessant roar of the transport planes of the Washington-Saigon airlift which have been round the clock landing at Tan Son Nhut airport "tons of weapons and munitions." Some of these have even been borrowed from US satellites and US bases in Asia. Meanwhile Thieu's arrogance has been keeping pace with this stream of hardware.

From leaks by Pengagon brasshats to a *UPI* correspondent, in the first ten days of November alone, the contingent delivered ran to "about 5,000 tons" of war goods including combat means, arms and ammunition (*UPI*, November 10).

Also according to high-ranking officers of the Saigon Command, during the same period of time a series of US-Saigon logistical depots come under attack and initial reports put the losses of war materials at the hands of the PLAF at some thousand tons.

The balance

There is a game one can play by keeping tabs on the "incomings" and "outgoings" of hardware like this:

— on the night of November 2, 1972: 7 dumps storing hundreds of thousands of shells at Hiep Khanh (Thua Thien) exploded for 5 hours;

— November 7: Communist rockets were fired on Pleiku airport destroying 3 storages, 5 planes including 1 U17B;

— November 8: major US Long Binh base attacked, many oil tanks mined;

— November 9: 2,250 gallons of petrol set on fire at My Chanh and 2,750 tons of munitions destroyed, etc.

There are also other entries in the red: US-Saigon planes downed by the patriots. For example on November 11, the losses included 2 jumbo choppers Chinook from the contingent delivered on an "emergency" basis.

At the end of each period of time, the balance must be edifying.

Discordant sounds

In the universal uproar against Nixon's duplicity, there were some discordant sounds from Indonesia's Malik and his direct boss. Malik, you may still remember, who had raised a voice in the wilderness of the Red River dykes and walked out of the Georgetown Conference, found Nixon's procrastination justified by the "necessity to clarify some divergent points" and to "reconsider whether the North Vietnamese were not the aggressors" since the latter "regarded themselves as Vietnamese."

Mr Malik seemed to be out of touch with the situation as Mr Hongladarom. And what about his boss? He simply repeated "Malikeries" like this: "Any army South of the 17th parallel who is not native of the place must withdraw, North Vietnamese and Americans alike" (*AFP*, November 9).

They make an admirable duet indeed! Indonesia also fought Dutch imperialism which staged a comeback after the Second World War though. If one argued the way they did, one would utter such pieces of nonsense as this: "Holland put off the signing of the agreement granting independence to Indonesia because of the neccessity to clarify divergent points." Or: "Any army not native of Java must pull out, Indonesians and Dutch alike."

But at that time no one reasoned like that. For the simple reason that the situation was then simpler: there were on one side the imperialists and their henchmen, and on the other the peoples battling for their liberation. Today, besides those two groups of opponents there are also people who claim "to be for peace" and "neutrals" who, by their words and deeds, chime in with the aggressors and their agents.

HUONG NAM

SOUTH VIET NAM In Struggle

6th Year – December 11, 1972

No 177

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CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTH VIET NAM NATIONAL FRONT FOR LIBERATION

8 FEB 13 1973
Cont Copy

editorial

OUR GOOD WILL AND DETERMINATION

THE Viet Nam side's good will and seriousness has been shown not only once but many times during and even before the negotiations. While resisting US aggression with arms in hand, the South Vietnamese people have not ceased making clear their desire for a peaceful settlement of the issue through meaningful and earnest talks. This has been unmistakably plain in the NFL political platform and the RSVN PRG 12 points. The presence at the Paris Conference of the former's delegation in the past and of the latter's at present as well as the 5 points, the 10 points, the 7 points and the two-point elaboration on these and the September 11 statement have been proof enough and vivid illustrations of our consistent and business-meaning attitude regarding a solution of the conflict on the basis of the respect for our fundamental national rights and right to self-determination.

WE have had no other wish than genuine peace, independence and freedom, no other hope than cessation of US aggression and withdrawal of US and satellite troops and no other aspiration than being left to see to our own problems like that of power, that of various armed forces and that of rehabilitation and construction in the spirit of national reconciliation and concord. Our position's justness, conformity to sense and reason, logicality and reasonableness have won it not only the warm support and sympathy of the people at home but also of progressives in the world and in the US as well. We want a negotiated settlement which will bring to an end our nation's sufferings and the American people's agony and make it possible for our two countries to live together in peace and friendship. We want to pave the way for the US administration's disinvolving from Viet Nam and Indochina with honour. We want to find answers to South Viet Nam's, to Viet Nam's internal problems in the spirit of national reconciliation and concord. We want to make good the aftermaths of the war which has played havoc in our people's affection for one another and in our land.

BUT we will not accept any neo-colonialist rule under any sort of disguise. We are resolved to battle indefatigably for our people's basic objectives which are genuine independence, freedom and peace. We do not fear any brutal force or any impudent threat. Our fight will go on until US aggression stops. We have enough foods, enough weapons and enough resolution to carry it on. We have won and we will ultimately win.

HAVING shown its bad faith and committed a breach of faith, the Nixon administration is trying to turn the tide. It is pouring more weapons and war materials into South Viet Nam, feverishly beefing up the Saigon army, mounting tens of thousands of police operations, and pushing up pacification in a search for a new position of strength on the battlefield for further bargaining at the conference table and minimizing our people's gains.

But all its efforts are to no purpose. The war has caused enough trouble and setbacks to the US like an inflated defence budget, deficits in the balance of payments, inflation, unemployment, growing social evils, a dimming international image... It is one of the most costly war in US history in terms of men and materials, and of credit. The harvest of 18 years of intervention and aggression has been only failure after failure. One still remembers that after its unilateral war, the US had to try its special war which eventually came to a flop and had to be replaced by a limited war. The latter had to be superceded by "Vietnamization" which has been going to the dogs. A degree of re-Americanization of the war has been carried out. However facts have sealed the fate of all US schemes, Vietnamization and Americanization alike. It is obvious that extending the losing war for another four years is no honourable way of ending it. It is not a wise course of action either.

Let Mr Nixon not labour under the delusion that time will wear out the Vietnamese people's sense of purpose. Stone and steel can be corroded but not single-mindedness of a nation convinced that "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom" and fortified with valiancy and determination in face of foreign invasions. Time will only stiffen their resolve. The US President should not believe that their good will may mitigate their resolve. The Vietnamese have both galore. They are fully aware that their good will will only be reciprocated if their resolve to fight does not flag and that they should toughen it if their good will goes without an adequate response.

THE Nixon administration's brutality, trickiness, bad faith, duplicity, procrastination of the war, stepping up of arm deliveries to its South Vietnamese agents and its pressure for our acceptance of its terms and alterations to basic principles already agreed on are rather naive methods with which it thinks it could get at the bargaining table what it has not been able to gain on the battleground. They are all the more naive as 30 million bombs and countless millions of bullets have not shaken our iron will. The record of the US in Viet Nam, 18 years' intervention and aggression, five presidents, nearly 200 billion dollars, over 10 million tons of bombs and bullets later has demonstrated that nothing can intimidate our people.

If Mr Nixon persists in his present manoeuvres, we will persist in our combat effort until final victory. His administration will be blamed by history for its accumulating war crimes and by the Americans for more trouble and failures it will have invited itself.

SOUTH VIET NAM In Struggle

Spanning a bridge for the trucks to the Ho Chi Minh Trail (Photo taken by Vien Phuc and Dang Dac Hien)